

News Release



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100-Day Centennial Celebration

Big Basin Birthday Bash Begins

SANTA CRUZ – With help from its newest parks commissioner – actor/producer/director Clint Eastwood – California State Parks and its nonprofit partners Saturday launched a 100-day celebration to commemorate the 100th anniversary of California’s oldest state park, Big Basin Redwoods.

Over the 100-day period, the Big Basin Centennial Celebration will include special lectures, hikes, campfire talks, history displays, art exhibits, music, dance and theater. It also will feature events in the community, including photography and art exhibits, and special kiosks at the Santa Clara, San Mateo and Santa Cruz county fairs. The celebration will culminate in a Centennial Festival at the park the weekend of September 13-15, 2002.

“This is a special time for Big Basin Redwoods State Park and the surrounding communities that have done so much to support it,” said Ruth Coleman, Acting Director of California State Parks. “This is one of the most beautiful parks in the state and serves as a monument to the power of individuals in the conservation movement.”

The kick-off event featured remarks from Eastwood, who was sworn in Saturday as the newest state parks commissioner by California Park and Recreation Commission Chairman Joseph W. Cotchett.

“I have some wonderful childhood memories from this park, so helping celebrate its centennial is special for me,” Eastwood said. “It is a fitting way to begin my term with the State Park and Recreation Commission.”

The theme of the Centennial Celebration includes the power of people in the conservation and parks movement. The successful effort to protect the Santa Cruz Mountains redwood forests from logging and establish the Big Basin area as a state park in 1902 eventually led to statewide efforts to preserve old growth redwood forests. Those efforts continue to this day.

The California coast redwoods are living remnants from the age of dinosaurs when plants and animals were huge. Millions of years ago, the ancestors of these redwoods covered the Northern

Hemisphere. The Ice Age reduced their location to a narrow belt along the West Coast from southern Oregon to Monterey County in California.

By the early 20th century, the lumber industry reduced its number even more. Today, only about 5 percent of California's original ancient redwood forest remain standing.

Today, Big Basin Redwoods State Park encompasses more than 18,000 acres of forestlands, including redwood, oak, chaparral and riparian habitats. The park is home to the largest continuous stand of ancient coast redwoods south of San Francisco.

Park visitors can enjoy 80 miles of hiking trails, linking the park from the eastern edge of the Santa Cruz Mountain range to the ocean. Waterfalls, lush canyons and a wide array of wildlife grace all areas of the park. Family and group camping, tent cabins, backpack camps, hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails are available year round. For reservations please call 800-444-7275 or visit online at www.parks.ca.gov.

The Park will have limited camping on the Festival Weekend September 13 - 15, 2002. Additional camping sites are available at nearby Henry Cowell State Park or visit the Santa Cruz County Conference and Visitors Council for other lodging options.

Supporters of the Centennial Celebration include the Sempervirens Fund and Save-the-Redwoods League, which have raised millions of dollars to add thousands of acres of redwoods to Big Basin over the last 100 years; the Mountain Parks Foundation, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to support environmental education in California State Parks; and the nonprofit California State Parks Foundation, which works to protect and enhance natural, cultural and historical treasures for all State Parks.

For more information online:

California State Parks <http://www.parks.ca.gov>

California State Parks Foundation <http://www.calparks.org>

Mountain Parks Foundation <http://www.mountainparks.org>

Sempervirens Fund <http://www.sempervirens.org>

Save-the-Redwoods League <http://www.savetheredwoods.org>

Santa Cruz County Conference and Visitors Council <http://www.santacruzca.org>

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